

1104.0 - CURF Microdata News, May 2009

Previous ISSUE Released at 11:30 AM (CANBERRA TIME) 29/05/2009



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IN THIS ISSUE

A number of important CURFs are featured in this Newsletter. They include the 2006 Census 5% Sample File CURF released on 13 May as well as the 2007 Mental Health and Wellbeing CURFs, released in April. Both have been eagerly taken up by researchers and processing applications for these CURFs has kept the Microdata Access team very busy over the last couple of months.

We are also anticipating the release of the 2007/08 National Health Survey (NHS) CURFs in July. The NHS CURFs are among the most heavily used of all ABS CURFs and we expect a strong demand for the new releases. Another CURF for which we expect a strong take up is the Business Longitudinal Database. Its predecessor, the Business Longitudinal Survey, last released in 2000 has been cited more often in the scholarly and other literature than any other CURF.

For more information about all these CURFs read more below.

Kim Farley-Larmour
Director, ABS Microdata Access Strategies

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NEW CURF RELEASES

This part of the Newsletter provides information on recent and forthcoming CURF releases. Keep up to date with CURF releases by subscribing to the ABS Email Notification Service or the ABS RSS Feed.

Microdata: Employee Earnings and Hours, Expanded CURF, Australia, 2006. Released: 31 March, 2009

The survey was designed to provide statistics on the composition and distribution of earnings and hours of employees and whether their pay is set by award, collective agreement or individual agreement. Distribution and composition of average weekly earnings and hours of employees is classified by sex, adult/junior, full-time/part-time, managerial/non-managerial, industry, State/Territory, sector (private/government), employer unit size and composition of earnings and hours paid for.

Microdata: Mental Health and Wellbeing, Basic and Expanded CURF, Australia, 2007. Released: 15

April, 2009

The 2007 National Survey of Mental Health and Wellbeing CURFs contain confidentialised data about each selected person and the household to which they belong. Data is also available based on diagnosis, mental health condition, and consultations for mental health (service use).

Microdata: Census of Population and Housing: Census Sample File (5%), Expanded CURF, Australia, 2006. Released: 13 May, 2009

The 2006 Expanded Census Sample File (CSF) is a comprehensive 5% Confidentialised Unit Record File (CURF) containing census characteristics, for a random sample of person, family, household and dwelling variables. The CSF is produced for model testing and statistical analysis.

For comprehensive information about these CURFs see the List of Available CURFs web page.



UPCOMING CURF RELEASES

Microdata: National Health Survey, Basic and Expanded CURF, Australia, 2007/08. Indicative release: 13 July, 2009

The 2007/08 National Health Survey is the third in the series of regular triennial health surveys conducted under the partnership arrangements between the ABS and the Department of Health and Ageing.

Both the Basic and Expanded CURFs will contain information about:

- the health status of the population, including long term medical conditions experienced;
- health-related aspects of people's lifestyle, such as smoking, exercise and alcohol consumption;
- use of health services such as consultations with doctors and other health professionals and other actions people have recently taken for their health, and
- certain demographic and socio-economic characteristics.

Microdata: Childhood Education and Care Survey, Expanded CURF, Australia, 2008. Indicative release: 29 July, 2009

This CURF presents information on children aged 0-12 years and their families. Information was collected about the use of formal and informal care, requirements for additional preschool/kindergarten or formal care, patterns of child care attendance, child care costs, the use of the child care benefit, working arrangements used by parents to help care for their children and parental income.

The CURF also presents characteristics of children aged 0-8 in their early learning years through the collection of information about the types of formal, non-formal and informal learning activities they engage in and the environments in which these activities take place. Information is also collected about patterns of attendance at preschool/kindergarten and school, including historical and usual attendance, and frequency of attendance.

Microdata: Business Longitudinal Database, Expanded CURF, Australia, 2004-05, 2005-06, 2006-07. Indicative release: 31 July, 2009

Previously known as A Profile of Australian Businesses, the aim of the Business Longitudinal Database is to facilitate micro level analysis for a panel (cohort) of small and medium businesses over time, and it includes both characteristics and financial data. A new wave of businesses is added each year and each wave is surveyed for five years.



Functionality

Location

Cost

But free to university users

Want to know more?

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Individual User Special Conditions Form
Responsible Officer Special Conditions Form

- We have clarified the wording on both of the Special Conditions Forms and also added a signature space.

Request for Access to a CURF (REQ1)

- We have added a new section to include Permitted Commercial Uses under the ABS/Universities Australia Agreement.

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SHORT CUTS

Short Cuts is a regular feature highlighting tips and reminders for CURF users and Contact Officers.

Q1. Do I need to do anything if my statistical purpose changes?

Answer: Yes! A new Request for Access to a CURF (REQ1) is required. Part of the approval process includes analysis and approval of the statistical purpose in accordance with the ABS legislation. Accordingly, a change in statistical purpose requires another REQ1 application and assessment.

Q2. How can I ensure the fastest turn around for my application?

Answer: We aim to deliver application assessments within twenty working days of receiving a completed application. A completed application includes detailed statistical purposes and outputs and has special conditions forms attached if required. Please also ensure that applications are clearly printed or typed. Processing delays most frequently occur when we need to refer the application back to the Individual User for more information or clarity.

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RADL: NEW AND IMPROVED

The underlying CURF protections in the Remote Access Data Laboratory (RADL) are currently being upgraded to automate a number of the checking and auditing processes. There will be improvements in the automation of protections for geographical variables and indigenous variables as well as other general and special conditions. These changes will make it easier for users to work within the CURF rules, and will decrease the amount of withheld output awaiting ABS clearance.

So how will this affect you?

Initially the changes will be implemented for SAS only. Releases are planned for STATA and SPSS in the future. When the new SAS version is released, it will be necessary for the ABS to delete all SAS saved datasets as a one-off exercise. Users will be notified by email before any deletions occur. Following this, all saved datasets that users create in SAS will automatically use the new protections.

If you would like more information about RADL please email radl@abs.gov.au or visit the RADL section of our website.

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IMPROVING OUR CURF MICRODATA WEB PAGES

The Microdata Access Strategies team are currently redeveloping all CURF Microdata web pages and updating the content and design of the pages. In coming months you will notice:

- Improved navigation - including the introduction of breadcrumbs and Quick Links to facilitate ready access to information
- Enhanced appearance - clearer presentation and layout of information
- Greater consistency - all pages will have consistent navigation and the same look and feel.

Help us to help you

Since these changes are designed to make use of the pages easier, we are keen to get your input on their effectiveness. If you would like to review the new pages and provide feedback before their release please contact us by email to microdata.access@abs.gov.au. We will arrange test access to the revised CURF pages.

Your feedback will be gratefully received and will help us to make our web pages even better.

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This page last updated 27 August 2009

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Australian Bureau of Statistics

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CURF Microdata News is a quarterly newsletter created by the Microdata Access Strategies Section at the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS).

CURF Microdata News is aimed at informing new and current Confidentialised Unit Record File (CURF) Microdata users about issues and developments in the access to, and use of, CURF Microdata. The newsletter periodically covers topics such as available and forthcoming microdata releases, terms and conditions of access, responsible access to microdata and best practice tips, pricing, microdata research outputs, frequently asked questions, and information about applying for ABS CURF microdata.

Interested readers are also invited to visit the CURF Microdata pages on the ABS web site for relevant up-to-date information about each of these matters, as well as all application forms.

This page last updated 27 August 2009

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